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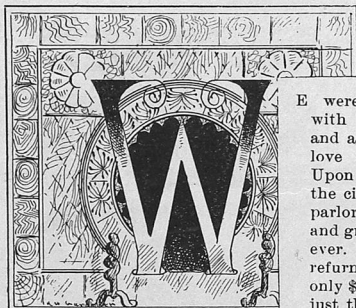
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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

ECONOMIC FURNISHING.

By EMMA M. BACKUS.



WE were country people with a limited income and an appreciation and love for the beautiful. Upon our return from the city this winter our parlor seemed more black and gray and square than ever. We decided to refurnish it. We had only \$100 for the purpose, just the cost of the black hair cloth set and gorgeous brussels carpet ten years ago. The carpet was not much worn; but the roses were as large as saucers, and the room of our city friend which we had in our mind was all softly tinted. True, instead of a hundred it had cost a thousand, but the result of our efforts far exceeded our expectations. I give you the details just as we really worked them out, therefore every suggestion will be found reliable.

Knowing any carpet satisfying to our purpose would encroach far into our allowance, we concluded to have a home-made rag carpet, not like any we had ever seen but a work of art. Our first step was to name the principal colors for our room; which must be worked into our carpet, and none other. It is hard to name tints but we found them in the supplement to THE DECORATOR for March. "A Design for Treatment of Wall," and we succeeded in matching them almost perfectly for our carpet with various combinations of the Diamond Dyes.

As our parlor was five yards square, we decided upon a woven rug four yards square, the border to be one-half yard wide. We brought forth all the old worn light colored cotton and woolen garments and pieces. We wanted for the nine-yard center of the rug, twelve pounds of rags; but we selected fifteen, as there is waste in tearing, and we desired to dye them before cutting and sewing. Five pounds of these we collected from the woolen, and colored the shade of red we desired by adding orange dye to the cardinal; adding a small quantity at a time, trying a small piece of cloth until the color was satisfactory. Five pounds of the lightest cotton which should be white or buff we colored a very light Bismarck brown, the remaining five pounds of cotton we put through a dye of light brown, to which we added orange and scarlet for cotton until it gave a light red brown, deeper and more red than the Bismarck brown. We cut all the rags the same length, about one-fourth yard, or one-third would have done as well, sewing them as old-fashioned "hit-or-miss," only there must be no miss or carelessness in the order of the colors, if there is it will show in the rug; sew them, brown, reddish brown, red, and so on in order, only our browns were more beautiful than brown, and our red a shade of salmon. The warp for the center was of one color from a dye prepared as for the second cotton, and woven as ordinary rag carpet one yard wide. For the border we wanted seven yards, one yard wide, for which we prepared the following rags, each color entire by itself, as the border was to be in solid checks.

Three pounds black woolens, three pounds peacock blue or green from a dye of green, to which we added light blue dye until it was just blue enough. Two pounds Bismarck brown. Two pounds the light red brown same as for center, and two pounds red as for centre. Now as we wanted the border in checks we had the warp double, that is, two threads put as one, that it might show plainly. We color four pounds of warp each of the above five colors; we had some over, but we wanted to be sure that we had enough, of course using two threads as one required twice the usual quantity. There was little difficulty in weaving this border as the weaver kept in mind that an entire width of the border is woven every half yard, when there must be two inches of warp filling as at the end of a breadth of rag carpet. Commence each breadth of border with an inch of the blue rags and ending it with an inch of the black, the blue will join the center piece all around, and the black form an outside stripe around the border, the warp for the border was one color and single, the border will be in stripes extending around the center. The entire cost of our carpet including dyes and seventeen cents for weaving per yard—\$4.80, and it will wear ten years in a family living room. The sixteen inches of floor between the rug and walls, we stained each board alternately dark for walnut and light for oak, procuring the stains prepared from the furniture shop at a cost of fifty cents and diluting one-half with turpentine.

We next removed the doors, yes! even the cupboard door

which is found in every country parlor; the meeting hats and bonnets must be taken up stairs. We removed the three shelves below the top shelf, sawed each shelf in three equal pieces, also sawed off three inches from the front of every shelf in the cupboard so they set back from the door, and put back the end pieces in their former places, leaving a cabinet space in the center over three feet tall. We then lined the cupboard every corner and part, with red velvet, one shade of red, costing fifty cents a yard. This was the only place in the room where we allowed ourselves to put anything cheap. We tacked it tightly in place no tack showing itself to view. We then put across the front of every shelf and around the side of the short shelves a brass railing two inches high. To occupy our center space we purchased for fifty cents a lovely plaster of paris statuette and bronzed it. On the side, and other shelves we placed various pieces of bric-a-brac, then from the window shop we ordered a glass door and that is the last of our unsightly cupboard. From the little wood remaining after the doors were removed we scoured off the paint and gave it a light coat of the walnut stain left from the floor. We were happy in having a fireplace, and in the attic of a neighbor we found for one dollar a pair of brass andirons. We ordered a fender from the city. There was a plain cheap wood mantel. We purchased, second-hand, a mirror four feet square for four dollars, and bought unstained moulding at the shop and cut it up, as we used and fitted it from this, with pine boards for a foundation and some pounds of Lincrusta Walton, we build up a colonial mantel. It cost us including fender and andirons \$15, but it looked as if it cost \$50. Thus far we had expended for

Carpet.....	\$4 80
Stain.....	50
Tacks.....	10
Velvet.....	4 00
Brass railing.....	3 00
Statuette.....	50
Paper bronze powder.....	10
Glass door.....	2 50
Fire place and mantle.....	15 00
Total.....	\$30 50

The only help that we hired was the paper hanger. We purchased six dollars worth of ingrain paper to compare with our light color, which we call neither brown or red. The border of the ceiling was also of this color, while the center was our light blue green. Around the top of the wall we put a stencil border twelve inches wide and directly under it a gilt moulding to hang the pictures from. We also put stencil work two inches in depth, but not the same pattern around the bottom of the wall, the cost of the whole being twelve dollars. For the chairs and sofa we allotted out thirty dollars. The question how to get one hundred dollars worth for thirty? Cheap chairs look very well for a short time in a dim light, but we were going to have plenty of sunlight in our room, and determined to have nothing cheap. To this end we took a trip to the city and patiently looked through second-hand furniture, culling the very best make which was worn and faded, only needing recovering to make it as good as ever. Luxurious faded blue silk chairs which if new sold for thirty dollars, we found for four and five. We returned with crushed plush and other material for upholstering purposes. This is not nearly as difficult as it appears before making the effort. We also brought home a twelve dollar lamp which we purchased for six dollars, and a gem of a hanging cabinet for two dollars; besides five yards of plush at one dollar a yard for portière which I am embroidering at present in tapestry work, beautiful and simple.

On the principle that the best of cotton is better than the poorest silk, we selected for curtains Nottingham lace at five dollars a window. Three is such a range for taste every one can suit themselves in the matter of curtains. We already had some good pictures, but we had here spent fifty dollars more than our \$100, and had no table or stand except our original marble top, but we had what country houses have not, a little old-fashioned wash stand with a drawer towards the bottom. We stained it cherry, bought a brass ring for fifteen cents which we put in the drawer, covered the top and the shelf below with plush the color of our paper, tacking it on the under side and put around all sides except the front of the top and shelf, a brass railing three inches high, and my room was to my mind perfect.

